

Nature Educator Volunteer - School Field Trips

Reports to: Youth Programs Coordinator

Program Description

Hoyt Arboretum is Portland's living museum of trees. Volunteer Nature Educators introduce students to the wonders of nature found in our 189-acre arboretum through the student field trip program, which engages students in trailside environmental education focusing on local ecology and the importance of trees. Volunteers gain experience working with children and teaching environmental education in an informal outdoor setting.

Responsibilities

- Lead small groups of students on 90-minute field trips along Hoyt Arboretum's trails
- Share learned knowledge of trees and forest ecology
- Participate with students in hands-on environmental education activities
- Inspire and encourage curiosity and discovery in the natural world

Qualifications

- Experience or interest in teaching students from a variety of backgrounds
- Background or interest in environmental education or natural sciences
- Love of the outdoors and comfortable walking on trails
- High energy and enthusiasm for teaching elementary-aged youth
- Good communication and public speaking skills
- Ability to carry a messenger-style bag and lift up to 20 lbs.
- Ability to walk on uneven terrain, lift, bend, and kneel as required
- All volunteers must pass a background check

Time Requirements

Nature Educators should be available to volunteer for a **minimum of 4 field trips per month** during the peak season (September-December and March-June). Field trips last 2 hours with 90-minutes of guided activities on the trail. Volunteers should plan to arrive at least 15 minutes before the school bus is scheduled to arrive.

Training

Nature Educators are required to **attend an introductory training session before the start of each season.**

During the training, volunteers will:

- Learn about Hoyt Arboretum, Hoyt Arboretum Friends (HAF), and its partnership with Portland Parks & Recreation
- Learn the Hoyt Arboretum field trip curriculum and expectations of the field trip program
- Learn best practices for leading field trips, including teaching tips, group management, and engagement activities
- Learn different trail routes that would be appropriate for field trips
- Schedule shadowing opportunities before leading a group of your own.

Additional skill-builder training opportunities and resources are available throughout the field trip season.

Benefits

Hoyt Arboretum volunteers are eligible for an annual Washington Park volunteer parking pass and complimentary membership with HAF after **15 volunteer hours** have been completed. Benefits include a 20% discount in the Visitor Center, discounts on classes, monthly Lunch & Learn sessions, off-site field trip opportunities, invitations to members-only events, and an annual volunteer appreciation celebration.

To Apply: Please email volunteer@hoytarboretum.org or call (503) 823-1649 for more information.